



COPS *Fact Sheet*

COMMUNITY ORIENTED POLICING SERVICES
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

Universal Hiring Program

Adding Officers to the Street

*COPS HAS HELPED CHANGE THE
WAY AMERICA POLICES - FROM
OFFICERS RUSHING FROM INCIDENT
TO INCIDENT TO OFFICERS AND
RESIDENTS WORKING TOGETHER TO
PREVENT AND STOP CRIME AND
VIOLENCE.*

The Universal Hiring Program (UHP) is one of several approaches developed by the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) to increase the number of officers on the beat.

A decade ago as crime was soaring, law enforcement officers were rushing from incident to incident. Today, seven years after the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994 was signed into law, officers are walking the beat again. Citizens now know the officers policing their neighborhoods. Officers and citizens are partnering to develop creative and innovative ways to deal with long-standing problems.

Supporting Local Law Enforcement

UHP enables interested agencies to supplement their current sworn forces, or interested jurisdictions to establish a new agency, through three year Federal grants. Policing agencies, and jurisdictions seeking to establish new policing agency, are eligible to apply for this program. To date, COPS has invested \$4.4 billion through UHP.

Funding Provisions

Grants will be made for up to 75 percent of the total salary and benefits of each new officer over three years, and up to a maximum of \$75,000 per officer, with the remainder to be paid by state or local funds. Funding will begin once the new officers have been hired or on the date of the award, whichever is later, and will be paid over the course of the grant.

Waivers of the non-Federal matching requirement may be requested under UHP, but will be granted only upon a showing of extraordinary fiscal hardship.

COPS grant funds must not be used to replace local funds that eligible agencies otherwise would have devoted to sworn officer hiring. The hiring of officers under UHP must be in addition to, and not in lieu of, officers that otherwise would have been hired with local funds. All grant recipients must develop a written plan to retain COPS-funded officer positions for at least one full local budget cycle after Federal funding has ended. This plan must be submitted to the COPS Office with an application. The COPS Office will monitor the grantee's implementation of its retention plan for one full local budget cycle, following expiration of the three-year grant.

In hiring additional officers, agencies may not reduce the scope of their customary screening and training procedures, and must include community policing principles in their training curricula.

Contact COPS

For more information, call the U.S. Department of Justice Response Center at 1-800-421-6770. Additional information on the COPS Office and this program is available on the Internet via the COPS web site at www.cops.usdoj.gov.